

John Hopwood
2459 Queenston Rd
Cleveland, OH 44118
5/5/99

Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Re: Docket # 98N-1038, "Irradiation in the Production, Processing, and Handling of Food"

To whom it may concern:

As a registered nurse and parent, I have concerns about the health of my community and family.

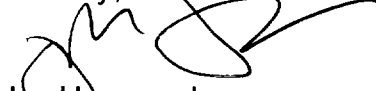
The FDA should retain the current labeling law, the current terminology of "treated with radiation" or "treated by irradiation," and the use of the radura symbol on all irradiated whole foods.

Processing by irradiation causes chemical changes that are not evident and are potentially hazardous. Meat may have a higher level of carcinogenic benzene. All irradiated foods contain unique radiolytic products that have never been tested. Some irradiated foods have different texture and spoilage characteristics than untreated foods. Most fruits and vegetables have nutrient losses that are not obvious or expected by the consumer.

I believe that label should be large enough to be readily visible to the consumer, on the front of the package. For displayed whole foods such as produce, a prominent informational display similar to that used for meats should be used (but containing the term "irradiation" and the radura).

Because of the need to assess the public health effects of widespread use of irradiated foods, I believe that the FDA's labeling requirement should not be permitted to expire.

Sincerely,


John Hopwood

98N-1038

C1366